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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001*

Part V
Regional cooperation for development

Section 20
Economic and social development in Western Asia

(Programme 18 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001)

Contents

		Page
Overview		2
A.	Policy-making organs	6
B.	Executive direction and management	7
C.	Programme of work	9
1.	Management of natural resources and environment	10
2.	Improvement of the quality of life	14
3.	Economic development and global changes	18
4.	Coordination of policies and harmonization of norms and regulations for sectoral development	21
5.	Development, coordination and harmonization of statistics and information	25
D.	Programme support	29

* The present document contains section 20 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001. The complete proposed programme budget will subsequently be issued in final printed form as *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/54/6/Rev.1).

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Section 20
Economic and social development in Western Asia

(Programme 18 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001)

Overview

20.1 The programme of work under this section has been elaborated within the framework of programme 18 of the revised medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001, as revised (A/53/6/Rev.1), and will be implemented by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

20.2 The principal objective of the programme during the biennium 2000–2001 will be to articulate regional perspectives and mechanisms for pursuing sustainable development in selected socio-economic fields that would result in the following: (a) forging the missing regional link between national perspectives and global trends; (b) building consensus among member States on policies and on the use of norms, standards and legislative instruments by identifying common grounds; (c) assisting member States in building capacities in various fields; (d) facilitating and increasing partnership between governmental organizations and civil society institutions; and (e) providing reliable, harmonized, comparable and timely data, information and statistics that would facilitate judicious policy action and decision-making and also assist member States in understanding and adopting internationally accepted statistical standards.

20.3 The proposed programme of work contains the following salient features:

(a) It maintains the multidisciplinary approach to the formulation and implementation of the work programme by developing clusters of multidisciplinary outputs around the issues of environment, regional follow-up to the implementation of the recommendations of four global conferences, poverty, civil society institutions, gender, the World Trade Organization and related issues, globalization of the world economy, electronic commerce and free trade in the region. These issues, and others cut across various subprogrammes and are thus addressed from various perspectives;

b) In line with the revised medium-term plan, though inherent in the work programme for the biennium 1998–1999, gender mainstreaming and human rights, within the context of the right to development, will become more pronounced in the proposed work programme for the biennium 2000–2001. The issue of human rights permeates the entire programme, since it is enshrined in the very mandate of the Commission, which revolves around the right to development. In this context, the issues of governance and civil society institutions and partnership between the State and civil society actors will receive special attention;

(c) During the biennium, ESCWA will attempt to keep abreast with the requirements of the age of communication. During the biennium 1998–1999, ESCWA developed a home page on its general activities. During the biennium 2000–2001, it will launch several home pages addressing the impact of global conferences on the quality of life, information from the ESCWA Population Information Network (POPIN) and ESCWA activities in the fields of water, transport, industry, agriculture and statistics. It is hoped that this will assist in propagating the work of ESCWA and in obtaining feedback from the public at large;

(d) Greater balance in statistical coverage in the economic and social fields, historically biased towards the former, has been observed owing to expansion in the area of social statistics and information. This is especially evident in the area of gender statistics and the development of social indicators in response to the recommendations relating to the Common Country Assessment/Minimum National Social Data Set (CCA/MNSDS), a development which will facilitate follow-up to the recommendations of global conferences at the regional level and the production of gender-disaggregated data, two issues of main concern to the United Nations system at large.

20.4 The overall resources proposed under this section amount to $49,994,400, including resource growth of $242,100. The proposed changes reflected in table 20.1 below are summarized as follows:

(a) The decrease of $1,446,600 under executive direction and management is the result of the redeployment of one P-5, one P-4, one P-3, one P-2 and five Local level posts, which were approved for the Programme Planning and Coordination Unit, to programme support, where they will be merged with the Technical Cooperation Division to form the Programme Planning and Technical Cooperation Division, and a decrease of $20,000 for travel;

(b) The increase of $112,500 under programme of work includes $28,400 under general temporary assistance for statistical data-related tasks, $48,100 under consultants and expert group meetings in a number of areas and $36,000 under travel;

(c) The increase of $1,576,200 under programme support is the net result of increases and decreases under various objects of expenditure as follows: increases of (i) $1,478,100 under posts due to the redeployment of the staff of the Programme Planning and Coordination Unit, as mentioned above, and the proposed reclassification of one P-3 post to the P-4 level to reflect rising needs for automation and electronic data-processing and communication and the increased complexity of the work in this area; (ii) $221,000 to provide for continuous support to IMIS operations; (iii) $232,900 for round-the-clock contractual security services for ESCWA premises; (iv) $29,800 for consultants to provide specialized services on video and satellite integration; (v) $20,000 to provide for travel requirements for the staff of the Programme Planning and Coordination Unit; (vi) $459,100 under contractual services, including outsourcing services to support the work of the General services section; and (vii) $82,000 for supplies and materials including office supplies, stationery, uniforms, etc. These increases are offset by decreases of (i) $728,100 under general operating expenses (owing mostly to reduction under maintenance of premises) and (ii) $218,600 under furniture and equipment.

20.5 It is estimated that during the biennium 2000–2001, extrabudgetary resources amounting to $481,200 will be utilized to supplement resources from the regular budget to finance activities related to the follow-up to global conferences such as round table discussions on tools and approaches to alleviate poverty, preparation of studies on micro-credit, workshops on social indicators and information materials on gender mainstreaming. Other activities financed through extrabudgetary resources include advisory services to enhance institutions of civil society and their integration in the national decision-making process, the promotion of income-generating activities for disabled persons, and the development of statistics on poverty.

Table 20.1 **Summary of requirements by component**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

(1) *Regular budget*

Component	*1996-1997 expenditures*	*1998-1999 appropriations*	*Resource growth*		*Total before recosting*	*Recosting*	*2000-2001 estimates*
			Amount	*Percentage*			
A. Policy-making organs	23.3	108.0	–	–	108.0	10.9	118.9
B. Executive direction and management	2 787.7	3 216.2	(1 446.6)	(44.9)	1 769.6	95.3	1 864.9
C. Programme of work	14 032.2	22 748.6	112.5	0.4	22 861.1	885.4	23 746.5
D. Programme support	16 067.9	23 679.5	1 576.2	6.6	25 255.7	2 025.4	27 281.1
Total	**32 911.1**	**49 752.3**	**242.1**	**0.4**	**49 994.4**	**3 017.0**	**53 011.4**

(2) *Extrabudgetary resources*

1996–1997 expenditures	1998–1999 estimates	Source of funds	2000–2001 estimates
		(a) Services in support of:	
–	–	(i) United Nations organizations	–
–	–	(ii) Extrabudgetary activities	–
–	–	(b) Substantive activities	–
		(c) Operational projects	
273.2	1 235.1	UNDP	481.2
1 187.9	1 325.8	UNFPA	–
5.5	0.5	UNESCO	–
9.0	9.6	UNICEF	–
12.0	–	UNEP	–
73.7	19.2	World Bank	–
9.5	13.5	ILO	–
1 248.6	942.5	ESCWA Trust Fund	–
516.4	324.2	Multilateral sources	–
46.0	10.0	Bilateral sources	–
3 381.8	**3 880.4**	**Total**	**481.2**
36 292.9	**53 632.7**	**Total (1) and (2)**	**53 492.6**

Table 20.2 **Summary of requirements by object of expenditure**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

(1) *Regular budget*

Object of expenditure	1996–1997 expenditures	1998–1999 appropriations	Resource growth		Total before recosting	Recosting	2000–2001 estimates
			Amount	Percentage			
Posts	27 934.4	41 286.5	51.5	0.1	41 338.0	2 174.0	43 512.0
Other staff costs	197.3	518.0	482.3	93.1	1 000.3	100.5	1 100.8
Consultants and experts	620.6	1 053.4	77.9	7.3	1 131.3	113.8	1 245.1
Travel	395.3	468.8	36.0	7.6	504.8	24.5	529.3
Contractual services	293.8	440.8	459.1	104.1	899.9	90.3	990.2
General operating expenses	1 968.1	4 301.4	(728.1)	(16.9)	3 573.3	358.6	3 931.9
Hospitality	0.6	18.0	–	–	18.0	1.8	19.8
Supplies and materials	604.4	681.8	82.0	12.0	763.8	76.7	840.5
Furniture and equipment	896.6	983.6	(218.6)	(22.2)	765.0	76.8	841.8
Total	**32 911.1**	**49 752.3**	**242.1**	**0.4**	**49 994.4**	**3 017.0**	**53 011.4**

(2) *Extrabudgetary resources*

1996–1997 expenditures	*1998–1999 estimates*	*Object of expenditure*	*2000–2001 estimates*
1 060.9	1 604.7	Posts	169.9
754.9	506.2	Other staff costs	–
424.3	406.2	Consultants and experts	83.0
193.4	350.1	Travel	20.0
60.4	236.5	Contractual services	–
334.7	158.2	General operating expenses	14.7
19.8	10.6	Supplies and materials	–
96.0	15.9	Furniture/equipment acquisition	–
437.4	580.2	Fellowships, grants, contributions	170.0
–	11.8	Other	23.6
Total	**3 381.8**	**3 880.4**	**481.2**
Total (1) and (2)	**36 292.9**	**53 632.7**	**53 492.6**

Table 20.3 **Post requirements**

	Established posts		*Temporary posts*					
	Regular budget		*Regular budget*		*Extrabudgetary resources*		*Total*	
	1998–1999	*2000–2001*	*1998–1999*	*2000–2001*	*1998–1999*	*2000–2001*	*1998–1999*	*2000–2001*
Professional category and above								
USG	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
D-2	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
D-1	7	7	–	–	–	–	7	7
P-5	21	21	–	–	6	1	27	22
P-4/3	58	58	–	–	–	–	58	58
P-2/1	15	15	–	–	2	–	17	15
Total	**103**	**103**	**–**	**–**	**8**	**1**	**111**	**104**
Other categories								
Local level	160	160	–	–	5	–	165	160
Field Service	3	3	–	–	–	–	3	3
Total	**163**	**163**	**–**	**–**	**5**	**–**	**168**	**163**
Grand total	**266**	**266**	**–**	**–**	**13**	**1**	**279**	**267**

20.6 The estimated percentage distribution of the total resources of the Commission during the biennium 2000–2001 would be as follows:

	Regular budget	*Extra-budgetary*
	(percentage)	
A. Policy-making organs	0.2	–
B. Executive direction and management	3.6	–
C. Programme of work	45.7	100.0
D. Programme support	50.5	–
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**

A. Policy-making organs

Table 20.4 **Summary of requirements by object of expenditure**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Regular budget

Object of expenditure	*1996–1997 expenditures*	*1998–1999 appropriations*	*Resource growth*		*Total before recosting*	*Recosting*	*2000–2001 estimates*
			Amount	*Percentage*			
Other staff costs	23.3	108.0	–	–	108.0	10.9	118.9
Total	**23.3**	**108.0**	**–**	**–**	**108.0**	**10.9**	**118.9**

20.7 The 13-member Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), which reports to the Economic and Social Council, and its main subsidiary body, the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region, meet biennially. ESCWA meets in ministerial session. It has established six specialized intergovernmental subsidiary bodies to advise on policy formulation in their respective areas and provide a forum for consultation on various aspects of the programme of work and on emerging issues. These subsidiary bodies and the number of days of meetings for each one are as follows: the Statistics Committee, (3 days); the Committee on Social Development (3 days); the Committee on Energy (2 days); the Committee on Water Resources (3 days); the Committee on Transport (2 days); and the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region (3 days). These Committees were established by ESCWA resolutions 179 (XVI), 198 (XVII), 204 (XVIII), 205 (XVIII), 213 (XIX) and 214 (XIX), respectively. The Committee on Water Resources and the Technical Committee hold their sessions annually, while the other Committees convene their sessions biennially.

Resource requirements (at current rates)

Other staff costs

20.8 The estimated requirements of $108,000, at maintenance level, relate to the provision of interpretation, translation, administrative, secretarial and other relevant services to the twenty-first session of the Commission and the twelfth session of its Technical Committee and to the sessions of its six subsidiary committees referred to above.

B. Executive direction and management

Table 20.5 **Summary of requirements by object of expenditure**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Regular budget

Object of expenditure	1996–1997 expenditures	1998–1999 appropriations	Resource growth		Total before recosting	Recosting	2000–2001 estimates
			Amount	Percentage			
Posts	2 674.3	3 055.8	(1 426.6)	(46.6)	1 629.2	87.1	1 716.3
Consultants and experts	–	25.4	–	–	25.4	2.6	28.0
Travel	113.4	135.0	(20.0)	(14.8)	115.0	5.6	120.6
Total	**2 787.7**	**3 216.2**	**(1 446.6)**	**(44.9)**	**1 769.6**	**95.3**	**1 864.9**

Table 20.6 **Post requirements**

Executive direction and management

	Established posts		Temporary posts					
	Regular budget		Regular budget		Extrabudgetary resources		Total	
	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001
Professional category and above								
USG	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
D-2	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
P-5	2	1	–	–	–	–	2	1
P-4/3	2	–	–	–	–	–	2	–
P-2/1	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Total	**7**	**3**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**7**	**3**
Other categories								
Local level	11	6	–	–	–	–	11	6
Total	**11**	**6**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**11**	**6**
Grand total	**18**	**9**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**18**	**9**

20.9 The Office of the Executive Secretary provides overall direction, management and policy guidelines for substantive divisions, technical cooperation and regional advisory services and information services rendered by the ESCWA secretariat. It also establishes guidelines and priorities for the preparation of the medium-term plan, the programme budget, the implementation of ESCWA's programme of work and its evaluation. It establishes liaison with member States and with subregional, regional and international organizations; United Nations agencies and offices; other regional commissions; and the United Nations Secretariat, for the purpose of coordinating priorities and areas of common interest.

20.10 The Office of the Executive Secretary oversees the conduct of the biennial sessions of the Commission and of its Technical Committee; the conduct of the Commission's six specialized subsidiary intergovernmental bodies; the celebration of special events; and the convening of ad hoc meetings of eminent persons and government representatives to discuss emerging issues and apprise representatives of member States of recent developments. Furthermore, it convenes periodic meetings of the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Group and the Consultative Committee of Ambassadors, two advisory bodies established to further facilitate

consultation between the ESCWA secretariat, on the one hand, and member States and other United Nations organizations, on the other.

20.11 In addition, the Office administers public information functions through the joint services of the United Nations Information Centre/United Nations Information Services. The information services activities aim at increasing public awareness and understanding of the work conducted by the United Nations in general and ESCWA and the specialized agencies in Lebanon in particular. These activities, including those undertaken jointly with the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, have steadily increased upon the relocation of ESCWA to Beirut, and this trend is expected to persist owing to the media profile of the host country. Activities will include the issuance of press releases, bulletins and information kits, the development of quality audio and video programmes, the production of an ESCWA information booklet, the issuance of occasional pamphlets or brochures to cover special events, the preparation of lectures and briefing for journalists on United Nations issues and the creation of a home page on the general activities of ESCWA addressed to the public at large.

20.12 A major undertaking of the ESCWA secretariat and the Office of the Executive Secretary is the biennial publication entitled *ESCWA Report*, which provides information on the Commission and its mandates, highlights its main activities and projects during each biennium and outlines its aspirations.

Resource requirements (at current rates)

Posts

20.13 The estimated requirements of $1,629,200, reflecting a decrease of $1,426,600, relate to the posts as indicated in table 20.6 above. The decrease of $1,426,600 results from the proposed redeployment of the posts of the Programme Planning and Coordination Unit (1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 P-2 and 5 Local level) to programme support where they will be merged with the posts of the Technical Cooperation Division to form the Programme Planning and Technical Cooperation Division.

Consultants and experts

20.14 The estimated requirements of $25,400, at maintenance level, would cover the cost of consultants' fees and travel in areas that do not fall under the mandates of any of the substantive divisions, as may be requested by the Commission or at the initiative of the Executive Secretary.

Travel of staff

20.15 The estimated requirements of $115,000, reflecting a reduction of $20,000, would provide for travel of the Executive Secretary, the Deputy Executive Secretary and their immediate staff for consultations with Governments and the specialized agencies, to attend meetings within and outside the ESCWA region, including meetings of the executive secretaries of regional commissions and intergovernmental meetings, as well as for consultations at Headquarters. The reduction of $20,000 is related to the travel requirements of the Programme Planning and Coordination Unit. It is proposed to redeploy this amount to programme support.

C. Programme of work

Table 20.7 **Summary of requirements by programme**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

(1) *Regular budget*

Programme	1996–1997 expenditures	1998–1999 appropriations	Resource growth		Total before recosting	Recosting	2000–2001 estimates
			Amount	Percentage			
1. Management of natural resources and environment	1 888.9	4 083.1	56.8	1.3	4 139.9	159.0	4 298.9
2. Improvement of the quality of life	3 659.9	5 728.9	(169.7)	(2.9)	5 559.2	211.4	5 770.6
3. Economic development and global changes	4 393.4	4 034.6	182.0	4.5	4 216.6	159.3	4 375.9
4. Coordination of policies and harmonization of norms and regulations for sectoral development	2 030.3	5 978.2	26.4	0.4	6 004.6	212.9	6 217.5
5. Development, coordination and harmonization of statistics and information	2 059.7	2 923.8	17.0	0.5	2 940.8	142.8	3 083.6
Subtotal	**14 032.2**	**22 748.6**	**112.5**	**0.4**	**22 861.1**	**885.4**	**23 746.5**

(2) *Extrabudgetary resources*

1996–1997 expenditures	1998–1999 estimates	Source of funds	2000–2001 estimates
		(a) Services in support of:	
–	–	(i) United Nations organizations	–
–	–	(ii) Extrabudgetary activities	–
–	–	(b) Substantive activities	–
		(c) Operational projects	
273.2	1 235.1	UNDP	481.2
1 187.9	1 325.8	UNFPA	–
5.5	0.5	UNESCO	–
9.0	9.6	UNICEF	–
12.0	–	UNEP	–
73.7	19.2	World Bank	–
9.5	13.5	ILO	–
80.5	155.2	ESCWA Trust Fund	–
459.7	318.5	Multilateral sources	–
46.0	10.0	Bilateral sources	–
2 157.0	**3 087.4**	**Total**	**481.2**
16 189.2	**25 836.0**	**Total (1) and (2)**	**24 227.7**

Table 20.8 **Post requirements**

Programme of work

	Established posts		Temporary posts					
	Regular budget		Regular budget		Extrabudgetary resources		Total	
	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001
Professional category and above								
D-1	5	5	–	–	–	–	5	5
P-5	15	15	–	–	6	1	21	16
P-4/3	37	37	–	–	–	–	37	37
P-2/1	8	8	–	–	2	–	10	8
Total	**65**	**65**	**–**	**–**	**8**	**1**	**73**	**66**
Other categories								
Local level	42	42	–	–	4	–	46	42
Total	**42**	**42**	**–**	**–**	**4**	**–**	**46**	**42**
Grand total	**107**	**107**	**–**	**–**	**12**	**1**	**119**	**108**

20.16 Within the programme of work, the estimated percentage distribution of resources among subprogrammes would be as follows:

Subprogramme	Regular budget	Extrabudgetary
	(percentage)	
1. Management of natural resources and environment	18.1	–
2. Improvement of the quality of life	24.3	53.1
3. Economic development and global changes	18.4	–
4. Coordination of policies and harmonization of norms and regulations for sectoral development	26.3	–
5. Development, coordination and harmonization of statistics and information	12.9	46.9
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**

Subprogramme 1
Management of natural resources and environment

Table 20.9 **Summary of requirements by object of expenditure**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

(1) *Regular budget*

Object of expenditure	1996–1997 expenditures	1998–1999 appropriations	Resource growth		Total before recosting	Recosting	2000–2001 estimates
			Amount	Percentage			
Posts	1 797.6	3 850.9	–	–	3 850.9	133.3	3 984.2
Consultants and experts	58.8	176.2	49.8	28.2	226.0	22.7	248.7
Travel	32.5	56.0	7.0	12.5	63.0	3.0	66.0
Total	**1 888.9**	**4 083.1**	**56.8**	**1.3**	**4 139.9**	**159.0**	**4 298.9**

(2) *Extrabudgetary resources*

1996–1997 expenditures	1998–1999 estimates	Source of funds	2000–2001 estimates
		(a) Services in support of:	
–	–	(i) United Nations organizations	–
–	–	(ii) Extrabudgetary activities	–
–	–	(b) Substantive activities	–
		(c) Operational projects	
12.0	–	UNEP	–
4.5	17.5	ESCWA Trust Fund	–
180.1	–	Multilateral sources	–
22.9	–	Bilateral sources	–
Total	**219.5**	**17.5**	–
Total (1) and (2)	**2 108.4**	**4 100.6**	**4 298.9**

Table 20.10 **Post requirements**

Subprogramme 1. Management of natural resources and environment

	Established posts		Temporary posts					
	Regular budget		Regular budget		Extrabudgetary resources		Total	
	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001
Professional category and above								
D-1	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
P-5	2	2	–	–	1	–	3	2
P-4/3	7	7	–	–	–	–	7	7
P-2/1	2	2	–	–	–	–	2	2
Total	**12**	**12**	**–**	**–**	**1**	**–**	**13**	**12**
Other categories								
Local level	7	7	–	–	–	–	7	7
Total	**7**	**7**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**7**	**7**
Grand total	**19**	**19**	**–**	**–**	**1**	**–**	**20**	**19**

20.17 The subprogramme is implemented by the Energy, Natural Resources and Environment Division.

20.18 The subprogramme will promote the efficient and sustainable use of energy and water resources and the fostering of regional cooperation in the areas of energy, water and environment, with the ultimate objective of improving the quality of life. In this context, it will continue to address the consequences of socioeconomic development in the ESCWA region, evidenced in high population growth, pollution and rising demand for water and energy for agricultural and industrial purposes. It will also continue to promote the opening of the market to environmentally clean technologies and identifying common denominators for policy makers in the region to facilitate cooperation and strengthen linkages between the fields of energy, water and environment.

20.19 Activities will focus on the following main areas: efficient use of energy and promoting the use of renewable energy resources; rational use and conservation of scarce water resources and the provision of additional water sources using new technologies with appropriate economic energy systems (e.g., water desalination);

the role of women in conserving water resources and energy in remote areas; public participation (non-governmental organizations) in promoting water and energy sectors; the international conventions, laws and protocols, particularly the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol, the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses and other legal instruments that guide ESCWA member States with respect to their legal international rights.

20.20 The subprogramme will continue its cooperation activities aimed at strengthening national capacities in the environmental field and disseminating relevant information to assist in developing national and regional environmental profiles. The subprogramme will also address environmental legislation and enforcement aimed at improving the state of the environment in member States. Efforts will continue to integrate the environmental dimension in all ESCWA subprogrammes and to link their activities to those undertaken by other regional organizations to ensure complementarity and synergy at the regional level.

Expected accomplishments

20.21 The expected accomplishments include: (a) increased capacity of member States in the identification of effective technological options for water desalinization and for reducing pollution; (b) streamlining of national energy and water policies; (c) increased dissemination of data and information on water, energy and the environment; (d) improved institutional arrangements and functioning; and (e) closer regional cooperation through identification of common grounds.

Outputs

20.22 During the biennium 2000–2001, the following outputs will be delivered:

(a) *Servicing of intergovernmental/expert bodies*

(i) Substantive servicing. Four meetings of the Committee on Energy and 12 meetings of the Committee on Water Resources;

(ii) Parliamentary documentation. Three reports to the Commission on: the third session of the Committee on Energy; and one each on the fourth and fifth sessions of the Committee on Water Resources;

(iii) Ad hoc expert groups. Five expert group meetings on disseminating renewable energy technologies in ESCWA member States; energy for sustainable development in ESCWA member States: efficient use of energy and greenhouse gas abatement; implication of groundwater rehabilitation for water resources protection and conservation; legal aspects of management of shared water resources in the region; and development of harmonized regional environmental impact assessment among member States.

(b) *Other substantive activities*

(i) Fourteen non-recurrent publications. Potential and prospects for renewable energy electricity generation in the region; efficient use of energy in the building sector: an analysis of options for selected member States; options and opportunities for greenhouse gas abatement in the energy sector of the region; efficient use of energy in the industrial sector: an analysis of options for selected member States; techno-economic evaluation of energy supply options for water desalinization in the region; regional approach for disseminating renewable energy technologies; implication of groundwater rehabilitation on water resources protection and conservation: artificial recharge and water quality improvement in the region; role of desalinated water in augmentation of the water supply in selected countries; enhancement of institutional arrangements pertaining to water legislation enforcement and improvement of institutional functions in selected countries; assessment of legal aspects affecting management of shared water resources in the region; evaluation of the environmental impact assessment process in selected countries; report on the current status of environmental impact assessments: decision-

making practices in the region; development of guidelines for harmonized environmental impact assessments suitable for the region; and report of the expert group meeting on groundwater rehabilitation for water resources protection and conservation;

(ii) Technical material for outside users (databases, software, etc.). Development and maintenance of the ESCWA home page on water;

(c) *International cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison*

(i) Coordination, cooperation and/or liaison with other international governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations as follows: the League of Arab States and its subsidiary bodies in the areas of energy supply options for water desalination in the region, renewable energy, greenhouse gases abatement in the energy sector, groundwater rehabilitation, management of shared water resources and enhancement of institutional arrangement in water sector; the European Union in relation to efficient use of energy and greenhouse gas abatement in the energy sector; the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries on efficient use of energy, renewable energy, greenhouse gas abatement in the energy sector and energy supply options for water desalination; the Organization of the Islamic Conference, including the Islamic Development Bank, on the efficient use of energy, renewable energy, greenhouse gas abatement in the energy sector, energy supply options for water desalination and the enhancement of institutional arrangement pertaining to water legislation enforcement; the Arab Centre for Studies of Arid Zones and Drylands and the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization on the legal aspects of management of shared water resources, groundwater rehabilitation and the establishment of an electronic database on water resources; the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment and its steering committees on desertification, industrial pollution and environmental awareness on issues, such as enhancing national capacities for adhering to international environmental conventions (i.e. climate change; desertification; biological diversity etc.), environmental indicators, information networking, environmental implications of Arab Free Trade Zone (International Organization for Standardization's 14000 Series) and other activities; the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region on joint activities and coordination of regional approaches to environment and sustainable development; the Centre on Environment and Development in the Arab Region and Europe on identification of joint activities in areas of concern for both organizations; participation in the activities of the newly established Arab Regional Network on Environmental Information, including issues pertaining to shared water resources; liaising with non-governmental organizations responsible for environment in member States to strengthen their capacity and to disseminate relevant information to promote national sustainable development; and cooperation with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature to enhance regional environmental priorities in the context of global efforts to conserve nature;

(ii) Coordination and cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/Regional Office for Science and Technology for the Arab States on the management of shared water resources and the implementation of groundwater rehabilitation for water resources protection; and with the World Bank, WHO, UNEP, UNDP and FAO in the area of water supply facilities privatization and the enhancement of institutional arrangements pertaining to the development of water resources in ESCWA member States; collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and with other regional commissions and participation in the meetings of the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development and the Administrative Committee on Coordination Subcommittee on Water Resources.

Resource requirements (at current rates)

Posts

20.23 The resource requirements of $3,850,900 at maintenance level, would cover the cost of posts as indicated in table 20.10 above.

Consultants and experts

20.24 The estimated requirements of $226,000, including a resource growth of $49,800, would cover the cost of: (a) consultants ($102,600) to provide specialized expertise in the areas of efficient use of energy in various sectors, including environmental impact assessment, greenhouse gas abatement, legal aspects affecting management of shared water resources, role of desalination in meeting water supply requirements; and (b) the five ad hoc expert group meetings listed above ($123,400). The increase of $49,800 includes $39,000 for additional requirements under consultants and $10,800 under expert group meetings.

Travel

20.25 The estimated requirements of $63,000, including a resource growth of $7,000, would provide for travel of staff required for the preparation of publications and studies, consultations with officials of the countries in the region and of regional and international organizations active in the fields of natural resources and environment, as well as attendance at meetings dealing with issues of relevance to the subprogramme.

Subprogramme 2
Improvement of the quality of life

Table 20.11 **Summary of requirements by object of expenditure**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

(1) *Regular budget*

Object of expenditure	*1996–1997 expenditures*	*1998–1999 appropriations*	*Resource growth*		*Total before recosting*	*Recosting*	*2000–2001 estimates*
			Amount	*Percentage*			
Posts	3 512.8	5 426.6	(76.5)	(1.4)	5 350.1	194.3	5 544.4
Consultants and experts	94.3	226.8	(93.2)	(41.0)	133.6	13.4	147.0
Travel	52.8	75.5	–	–	75.5	3.7	79.2
Total	**3 659.9**	**5 728.9**	**(169.7)**	**(2.9)**	**5 559.2**	**211.4**	**5 770.6**

(2) *Extrabudgetary resources*

1996–1997 expenditures	1998–1999 estimates	Source of funds	2000–2001 estimates
		(a) Services in support of:	
–	–	(i) United Nations organizations	–
–	–	(ii) Extrabudgetary activities	–
–	–	(b) Substantive activities	–
		(c) Operational projects	
188.5	375.7	UNDP	255.3
1 187.9	1 325.8	UNFPA	–
5.5	0.5	UNESCO	–
58.0	34.0	ESCWA	–
7.5	13.5	ILO	–
158.8	174.7	Multilateral sources	–
Total	**1 606.2**	**1 924.2**		**255.3**
Total (1) and (2)	**5 266.1**	**7 653.1**		**6 025.9**

Table 20.12 **Post requirements**

Subprogramme 2. Improvement of the quality of life

	Established posts		Temporary posts					
	Regular budget		Regular budget		Extrabudgetary resources		Total	
	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001
Professional category and above								
D-1	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
P-5	4	4	–	–	4	–	8	4
P-4/3	8	8	–	–	–	–	8	8
P-2/1	4	4	–	–	1	–	5	4
Total	**17**	**17**	**–**	**–**	**5**	**–**	**22**	**17**
Other categories								
Local level	11	10	–	–	1	–	12	10
Total	**11**	**10**	**–**	**–**	**1**	**–**	**12**	**10**
Grand total	**28**	**27**	**–**	**–**	**6**	**–**	**34**	**27**

20.26 This subprogramme is implemented by the Social Development Issues and Policies Division.

20.27 The subprogramme will focus on promoting regional cooperation in furthering sustainable human development by advocating an integrated regional approach for follow-up to the recommendations of global conferences. To meet this objective, it will pursue a holistic approach to the right to development and mainstreaming a gender perspective into plans and programmes, with the ultimate objective of improving the quality of life.

20.28 In this connection, the subprogamme will serve as an early warning system for member States on the implications of social change by providing assistance and raising awareness with regard to the challenges in the next millennium and current issues of concern in the following priority areas: social impact of globalization, with particular reference to the labour market and employment as well as tools for alleviating

poverty; social and environmental impact of urbanization, including housing and human settlements; social and demographic impact of international migration; gender roles and partnership in the family, including youth; governance and institutions of civil society, including non-governmental organizations and community development; and reproductive health, which will be addressed for the first time.

20.29 The subprogramme will continue to build a gender-sensitive database on social policies and measures of impact on population, human development, human settlements and women and gender, together with demographic data sheets. In this context, it will expand into developing indicators for monitoring of and following up to global conferences. It will also continue addressing issues pertaining to the advancement of women and their participation in the development process, through gender mainstreaming, by formulating a new vision for gender equality for the third millennium. Issues pertaining to governance and advocacy in civil society will also continue to be at the core of this subprogramme. In this respect, while, in the past, emphasis was placed on the assessment of non-governmental organizations, emphasis will now be placed on their role in follow-up to the recommendations of global conferences whereby the activities will promote a participatory approach and synergy between the non-governmental organizations and national governmental bodies. Poverty will also be a pivotal issue under this subprogramme, but the emphasis will be shifted from characteristics of poverty, which were addressed during the biennium 1998–1999, to prescribing tools for poverty alleviation, such as micro-credit facilities and social funds. Issues pertaining to the family and partnership, youth and selected marginalized groups within the framework of social integration will continue to be addressed. The subprogramme will also continue to tackle issues pertaining to the environmental, social and physical impact of urbanization.

20.30 In formulating the above-mentioned priorities, attempts were made to link programmed activities with those outlined in a three-year extrabudgetary flagship project on integrated follow-up to global conferences, which was formulated by ESCWA and supported by UNDP, to forge a regional link for Arab States between the global vision and national endeavours to pursue the recommendations of global conferences. The project, put into effect in October 1998, also builds on inputs of other relevant United Nations organizations.

Expected accomplishments

20.31 By the end of the biennium 2000-2001, the subprogramme is expected to have identified tools for alleviating poverty and facilitated their adoption by Governments as policy instruments. This, in turn, is expected to lead to increased contribution of women to the gross national products; provision of low-cost housing; and setting up of micro-credit lending facilities. Furthermore, the subprogramme is expected to have strengthened the capacity of member States to use new indicators for monitoring and follow-up to United Nations global conferences in their reports and plans of action and to have raised their awareness with regard to the importance of adopting action-oriented policies relating to gender, population, urbanization, employment and other critical issues within the context of integrated follow-up to global conferences. Within this context, it is expected also that increased cooperation between governmental organizations and institutions of civil society will have been developed and training provided for building the capacity of the institutions of civil society.

Outputs

20.32 During the biennium 2000–2001, the following outputs will be delivered:

(a) *Servicing of intergovernmental/expert bodies (RB/XB)*

(i) Substantive servicing. Six meetings of the Committee on Social Development;

(ii) Parliamentary documentation. Two reports to the Economic and Social Council on: economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan; and one to the Commission on the third session of the Committee on Social Development;

(iii) Ad hoc expert groups. Two expert group meetings on dynamics of sustainable social development, interlinkages with migration, poverty and urbanization and appropriate technology for accessing population information in the region;

(iv) Regional meeting on progress made in the implementation of integrated regional follow-up by the Arab States to United Nations global conferences; and two round tables on approaches and tools to alleviate poverty and people-centred sustainable development (micro-credits and social funds);

(b) *Other substantive activities (RB/XB)*

(i) Ten recurrent publications: Demographic and related socio-economic data sheets (No. 11); Population Bulletin (Nos. 48 and 49); sustainable human development report of the ESCWA region; studies on women and development series; gender and citizenship and the role of non-governmental organizations in conflict-stricken ESCWA countries: case study of Lebanon and/or Yemen; newsletter on integrated regional follow-up by the Arab States to United Nations global conferences: progress achieved (4); two news bulletins on human settlements in the Arab world;

(ii) Twelve non-recurrent publications. Migration and population policies in ESCWA member States; annotated bibliography on Arab families; role of micro-credit and/or social development funds in poverty alleviation; role of globalization in labour market development, with emphasis on education and employment of youth; female-headed households in selected conflict-stricken countries: an exploratory survey for formulating poverty alleviation policies; towards partnership in the Arab family: gender roles, values and identity; civil society actors and sustainable urban development: the situation in the ESCWA region; municipalities and decentralization: issues of governance in the ESCWA region; urbanization, environment and sustainable human settlements development in the ESCWA region; and cities and social exclusion: towards social integration in the ESCWA region;

(iii) Electronic, audio and video issuances: media campaigns on gender and gender mainstreaming in relation to the impact of global conferences on the quality of life, in cooperation with the Information Service under executive direction and management;

(iv) Booklets, pamphlets, fact sheets, wall charts, information kits. Pamphlets, brochures and wall charts on the impact of global conferences on quality of life; development of technical notes, indicators, guidelines, and other material on selected themes, including good practices and success stories, relevant to integrated regional follow-up by the Arab States to United Nations global conferences;

(v) Technical material (databases, software, etc.): Development and maintenance of the ESCWA home page to raise awareness of the impact of global conferences on the quality of life; database on the gender-sensitive regional information system on policies and measures and specific social indicators for monitoring integrated follow-up to global conferences; and the ESCWA Population Information Network (POPIN) home page;

(c) *International cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison*

(i) Participation and coordination of activities with the League of Arab States and its subsidiary bodies including the Arab Labour Organization, the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations and others to follow up on United Nations global conferences;

(ii) Coordination of activities with the United Nations Secretariat, in particular the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNDP, UNIFEM, INSTRAW, UNRISD, UNEP, HABITAT, UNFPA, ILO and other United Nations agencies; participation in meetings of the Commission on Status of Women, the Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on Social Development and the Administrative Committee on Coordination Inter-agency Committee on Gender;

(iii) Participation and coordination with the Ad Hoc Inter-agency Working Group on Demographic Estimates and Projections in the production of demographic estimates and projections for the region;

(d) *Technical cooperation (RB/XB)*

(i) Technical assistance. Assistance to selected countries in: promoting follow-up to global conferences in relation to the use of the regional information system and relevant indicators for follow-up actions; computer Braille and income-generating activities for the blind; community-based rehabilitation; and the setting up of networks and mechanisms for sustainable human development;

(ii) Group training. Training workshop on social indicators;

(iii) Field projects. Community development services;

Resource requirements (at current rates)

Posts

20.33 The resource requirements of $5,350,100, reflecting a decrease of $76,500, relate to the posts indicated in table 20.12. The decrease is the result of the outward redeployment of one Local level post to subprogramme 3, Economic development and global changes, in order to strengthen the activities carried out in that subprogramme on transnational corporations and related issues.

Consultants and experts

20.34 The estimated requirements of $133,600, reflecting a decrease of $93,200, relate to (a) consultants ($97,600) to provide specialized expertise for the preparation of the two reports to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council and inputs to publications and studies, such as the reports on sustainable human development, the role of globalization in labour market development and migration and population policies; and (b) the cost of one expert group meeting on appropriate technology for accessing population information in the ESCWA region ($36,000). The decrease of $93,200 is the net result of reduced requirements for ad hoc expert group meetings ($127,200) and additional requirements for consultants ($34,000).

Travel

20.35 The estimated requirements of $75,500, at maintenance level, would provide for travel of staff for consultations with Governments, collection of data for preparation of reports and participation at meetings of United Nations bodies and regional organizations of relevance to the programme of work.

Subprogramme 3
Economic development and global changes

Table 20.13 **Summary of requirements by object of expenditure**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

(1) *Regular budget*

Object of expenditure	*1996–1997 expenditures*	*1998–1999 appropriations*	*Resource growth*		*Total before recosting*	*Recosting*	*2000–2001 estimates*
			Amount	*Percentage*			
Posts	4 046.0	3 866.3	76.5	1.9	3 942.8	134.2	4 077.0
Consultants and experts	265.9	133.4	93.5	70.0	226.9	22.8	249.7
Travel	81.5	34.9	12.0	34.3	46.9	2.3	49.2
Total	**4 393.4**	**4 034.6**	**182.0**	**4.5**	**4 216.6**	**159.3**	**4 375.9**

Table 20.14 **Post requirements**

Subprogramme 3. Economic development and global changes

	Established posts		*Temporary posts*					
	Regular budget		*Regular budget*		*Extrabudgetary resources*		*Total*	
	1998–1999	*2000–2001*	*1998–1999*	*2000–2001*	*1998–1999*	*2000–2001*	*1998–1999*	*2000–2001*
Professional category and above								
D-1	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
P-5	3	3	–	–	–	–	3	3
P-4/3	7	7	–	–	–	–	7	7
P-2/1	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
Total	**12**	**12**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**12**	**12**
Other categories								
Local level	6	7	–	–	–	–	6	7
Total	**6**	**7**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**6**	**7**
Grand total	**18**	**19**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**18**	**19**

20.36 This subprogramme is implemented by the Economic Development Issues and Policies Division. Its objectives will be to promote awareness among member States of macroeconomic management and development issues and to enhance the capacity of the countries in the region to meet the challenges of globalization. Within this framework, the programme of work will support member States in meeting the requirements of sustainable development by increasing understanding of linkages between trade and environment and the challenges of globalization by assessing the impact of their liberalization policies and in enhancing their development by promoting alternative sources of investment .

20.37 Emphasis will be given to the review and analysis of macroeconomic developments and the impact of instability in oil prices and revenues on economic performance in the region and prospects for diversification of their economies. The programme of work will be concerned with mobilizing financial resources and studying the prospects for mobilizing foreign direct investment and will continue to follow up on the implementation of the New Programme of Action for the least developed countries for the 1990s.

20.38 In a number of areas, the work programme for 2000–2001 will also continue with some activities initiated in earlier work programmes. This will include the challenges and opportunities created by the World Trade Organization, with focus on competition laws and policies; the impact of liberalization, with emphasis on the new role of the State, and comparative analysis of the role of the private sector in economic development. Also, as a continuation of efforts to address the implications of economic grouping (following studies on Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Single European Market), the subprogramme will now examine the implications of the euro-currency for ESCWA member States. New areas of concern will include electronic commerce; financial reporting, with emphasis on effective accounting and auditing practices; external debt management; examination and assessment of Arab free trade and free zones; and, in the area of governance, enhancing macroeconomic management.

Expected accomplishments

20.39 By the end of the biennium 2000–2001, the expected accomplishments will include: (a) increased awareness of macroeconomic issues and policies; (b) expanded understanding of World Trade Organization issues and of liberalization of financial markets; (c) improved ability to attract foreign investment; (d) increased

understanding of linkages between trade and environment; and (e) enhanced development of the technical capacity of the member States to improve the competitiveness of their economies.

Outputs

20.40 During the biennium 2000–2001, the following outputs will be delivered:

(a) *Servicing of intergovernmental/expert bodies*

(i) Substantive servicing of 12 meetings of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region;

(ii) Parliamentary documentation. Two reports to the Commission on the second and third sessions of the Technical Committee; two summary reports of the *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region*;

(iii) Ad hoc expert groups. Three expert group meetings on: economic diversification in oil producing countries; trade facilitation and electronic commerce in the ESCWA region; and identification of common grounds in selected ESCWA countries in approaches to competition laws and policy questions;

(b) *Other substantive activities*

(i) Seven recurrent publications: *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region* (2); part II of the *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region: role of the globalized economy and comparative analysis of the private sector in the ESCWA region*; preliminary overview of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA region (2); and review and appraisal of progress made by the Republic of Yemen in the implementation of the New Programme of Action for the least developed countries for the 1990s;

(ii) Twenty-one non-recurrent publications: Impact of the world oil markets on the economies of Gulf Cooperation Council countries: quantitative assessment and forecast; good governance: enhancing macro-economic management in selected countries; application of sustainable development indicators in the member States: analysis of results; economic diversification in oil-producing countries; globalization of financial markets: implication for the region; trade facilitation and electronic commerce in the region; trade in services in selected countries; implications of the euro-currency for the economies of the ESCWA region; external debt management in selected countries; World Trade Organization implications, opportunities and challenges for member States: selected issues; assessment of free trade areas in the ESCWA region; trade and environment in the ESCWA region: selected issues; competition laws in the ESCWA region; flow of foreign direct investment in the ESCWA region: data and analysis; comparative study of national strategies and policies with respect to foreign direct investment in selected countries; economic diversification in oil producing countries; trade facilitation and electronic commerce in the ESCWA region; and identification of common grounds in selected ESCWA countries in approaches to competition laws and policy questions;

(c) *International cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison*

(i) Cooperation with the League of Arab States and its subsidiary bodies on economic, trade and finance issues;

(ii) Strengthening cooperation, coordination and liaison with UNCTAD and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs as stipulated by mandates emanating from the General Assembly in this regard; identifying areas for joint implementation of activities; especially in relation to World Trade Organization issues, trade and environment, trade facilitation and free trade areas; attending the meetings of the Development Planning Commission; attending UNCTAD meetings and contribution on latest developments in the ESCWA region.

Resource requirements (at current rates)

Posts

20.41 The resource requirements of $3,942,800, reflecting an increase of $76,500, relate to the posts indicated in table 20.14. The increase of $76,500 is the result of the proposed inward redeployment of one Local level post from subprogramme 2, Improvement of the quality of life, to this subprogramme in support of the activities on transnational corporations programme, in particular as regards compilation and tabulation of data.

Consultants and experts

20.42 The estimated requirements of $226,900, reflecting an increase of $93,500, would cover the cost of (a) consultants fees and travel ($148,300) to provide expertise not available within the secretariat in the preparation of reports and publications such as two issues of the *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region* dealing, respectively, with the role of the State in the globalized economy and the role of the private sector in the ESCWA region; competition laws in the ESCWA region; comparative study of national strategies and policies with respect to foreign direct investment in selected countries, etc; and (b) the convening of the expert group meetings listed above ($78,600). The increase of $93,500 is the net result of additional requirements of $100,900 for consultants offset by a reduction of $7,400 for the expert group meetings.

Travel

20.43 The estimated requirements of $46,900, reflecting an increase of $12,000, relate to travel of staff for consultations with Governments and intergovernmental organizations, collection of data, participation at meetings and coordination with the specialized agencies and United Nations offices and departments, including other regional commissions, and UNCTAD.

Subprogramme 4
Coordination of policies and harmonization of norms and regulations for sectoral development

Table 20.15 **Summary of requirements by object of expenditure**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

(1) *Regular budget*

Object of expenditure	*1996–1997 expenditures*	*1998–1999 appropriations*	*Resource growth*		*Total before recosting*	*Recosting*	*2000–2001 estimates*
			Amount	*Percentage*			
Posts	1 863.1	5 637.7	–	–	5 637.7	179.9	5 817.6
Consultants and experts	129.6	267.2	26.4	9.8	293.6	29.5	323.1
Travel	37.6	73.3	–	–	73.3	3.5	76.8
Total	**2 030.3**	**5 978.2**	**26.4**	**0.4**	**6 004.6**	**212.9**	**6 217.5**

(2) *Extrabudgetary resources*

1996–1997 expenditures	1998–1999 estimates	Source of funds	2000–2001 estimates
		(a) Services in support of:	
–	–	(i) United Nations organizations	–
–	–	(ii) Extrabudgetary activities	–
–	–	(b) Substantive activities	–
		(c) Operational projects	
23.6	6.5	UNDP	–
9.2	1.7	ESCWA Trust Fund	–
61.5	20.5	Multilateral sources	–
16.6	–	Bilateral sources	–
110.9	**28.7**	**Total**	**–**
2 141.2	**6 006.9**	**Total (1) and (2)**	**6 217.5**

Table 20.16 **Post requirements**

Subprogramme 4. Coordination of policies and harmonization of norms and regulations for sectoral development

	Established posts		Temporary posts					
	Regular budget		Regular budget		Extrabudgetary resources		Total	
	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001
Professional category and above								
D-1	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
P-5	4	4	–	–	–	–	4	4
P-4/3	12	12	–	–	–	–	12	12
Total	**17**	**17**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**17**	**17**
Other categories								
Local level	9	9	–	–	–	–	9	9
Total	**9**	**9**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**9**	**9**
Grand total	**26**	**26**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**26**	**26**

20.44 This subprogramme is implemented by the Sectoral Issues and Policies Division. It will promote measures and policies to increase competitiveness and productivity in ESCWA member States in the areas of industry, technology, transport and agriculture and to improve regional cooperation through the promotion of harmonization of standards, the adoption of legal instruments and the strengthening of the capabilities of countries of the region in sectoral policy formulation.

20.45 While, during the biennium 1998–1999, emphasis was on identifying areas of possible cooperation, coordination and harmonization and initiating action in this respect in the areas of industry, technology, transport and agriculture, the emphasis during the biennium 2000–2001 will be on promoting integrated policies to enhance sectoral productivity and competitiveness for sustainable development in the context of increasing globalization trends. This would be achieved, among other things, through (a) human resources development in areas where capacity-building is needed, such as on-farm water use and efficiency, evaluation of agricultural and industrial policies and micro-credit schemes to alleviate rural poverty; (b) examination of certain impacts of globalization, whereby the implications of the General Agreement on

Trade in Services (World Trade Organization) on transport would be examined; (c) facilitation of procedures and practices affecting the physical and information flows and networking and exchanging relevant information and experiences among establishments concerned, including electronic-commerce, the Geographical Information System (GIS) and an integrated transport system in the Arab Mashreq; (d) promotion of appropriate environmentally sound technologies and technological policies to increase efficiency and productivity, with emphasis on water desalination and water treatment and the application of advanced technologies in transport and communication; (e) and initiating proposals for regional and subregional agreements in the various sectors by identifying common grounds and benefits and examining prospects for harmonization of food and agriculture policies, the impact of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), harmonization of sectoral norms, standards and legal instruments, the development of a framework for an integrated transport system and the facilitation of transport practices and procedures.

Expected accomplishments

20.46 The main accomplishments of this subprogramme will include: (a) enhanced awareness by member States of developing policies and enhancing their capacities to improve sectoral productivity and competitiveness in selected areas; (b) increased regional awareness and acceptance of the importance of adopting harmonized standards; (c) facilitation of harmonized policies through the conclusion of regional and subregional agreements; (d) raising awareness of member States with regard to the implications of globalization on certain sectors and providing policy recommendations in this regard; and (e) wider dissemination of timely information and data on sectoral policies that would facilitate decisions of policy makers.

Outputs

20.47 During the biennium 2000–2001, the following outputs will be delivered:

(a) *Servicing of intergovernmental/expert bodies*

(i) Substantive servicing of four meetings of the Committee on Transport;

(ii) Parliamentary documentation. Report to the Commission on the second session of the Committee on Transport;

(iii) Eight ad hoc expert groups on: coordination of industrial policies to increase productivity and competitiveness within the global trends; harmonization of industrial norms, regulations and legal instruments for regional cooperation; coordination of transport policies to facilitate trans-boundary flows within the global trends; harmonization of transport norms, regulations and legal instruments for regional cooperation; harmonization of agricultural norms, regulations and legal instruments for regional cooperation; coordination of agricultural policies to increase productivity and competitiveness within the global trends; coordination of technology policies to increase productivity and competitiveness within the global trends: technology initiatives in ESCWA member States; and capacity-building in pavement management systems;

(b) *Other substantive activities*

(i) Nine recurrent publications. Industry review in ESCWA countries (bulletin Nos. 3 and 4); science and technology review in ESCWA countries (bulletin Nos. 3 and 4); directory of research and development and research and development support institutions in ESCWA member States (bulletin No. 2); transport review in ESCWA countries (bulletin Nos. 3 and 4); agricultural review in ESCWA countries (bulletin Nos. 3 and 4);

(ii) Twenty-five non-recurrent publications. Review of industrial strategies and policies: preparing for the twenty-first century; potential of small and medium-sized enterprises for innovation in selected ESCWA countries; impact of the application of the International Organization for Standardization 9000 and 14000 Series on selected industrial sectors: case studies; assessment

of free zones: industrial and transport aspects (selected case studies); financial schemes for small and medium-sized enterprises in the ESCWA region; directory of support institutions for small and medium-sized enterprises in selected ESCWA countries; mainstreaming a gender perspective into selected productive and services sectors; methodology for the assessment of competitiveness of selected existing industries; technology initiatives in the ESCWA member States; environmentally sound technologies in selected sectors; water desalination and water treatment technologies in ESCWA member States, new technologies for enhancing competitiveness and productivity in selected sectors; study on harmonization of technology norms, regulations and legal instruments for regional cooperation: project planning and management for quality assurance personnel; multilateral agreement for an integrated transport system in the Arab Mashreq countries; implications of the General Agreement on Trade in Services on transport; development of a comprehensive framework for the analysis of the ESCWA integrated transport network; assessment of transport flows and infrastructure in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries; transport facilitation and electronic commerce in the ESCWA region; application of advanced information technologies in transport and communications; assessment of past experiences in using the Policy Analysis Matrix (PAM) in selected ESCWA countries; enhancing the productivity and rationalization of use of agricultural resources: on-farm water use efficiency; harmonization of norms, standards and legal instruments for selected agricultural inputs; micro-credit and micro-finance schemes to alleviate rural poverty in ESCWA member States; prospects for harmonization of food and agricultural policies in selected ESCWA countries; information systems for modernizing the operations of rural financial institutions in selected ESCWA member States;

(iii) Booklets, pamphlets, fact sheets, wall charts and information kits. Regional map for an integrated transport system for the Arab Mashreq countries;

(iv) Technical material (database, software, etc). Home pages of ESCWA industrial, technology, transport and agricultural activities and GIS in transport;

(c) *International cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison*

(i) Cooperation with the League of Arab States and its subsidiary bodies on industrial, transport and agricultural development issues; with the International Organization for Standardization on certification, accreditation, technology management and training; with the International Development Research Centre on activities related to technological capacity-building; with the Islamic Development Bank/Organization of the Islamic Conference on activities related to transport and technological capacity-building; with the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Transport Research Laboratory on transport infrastructure and safety issues respectively; and with the International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas on on-farm water level efficiency issues;

(ii) Coordination, cooperation and liaison with UNIDO, UNDP, UNCTAD, DESA, ILO, ICAO, FAO, UNESCO/Regional Office for Science and Technology for the Arab States, UNIFEM, the other regional commissions and the World Bank, in relevant areas of transport; science and technology, agriculture, capacity-building and training, entrepreneurship and small and medium-sized enterprises;

(d) *Technical cooperation (RB/XB)*

(i) Advisory services to ESCWA member States on technology policies and initiatives in selected areas; and technical assistance to member States in transport planning and management;

(ii) Training workshop on capacity-building in on-farm water use efficiency;

Resource requirements (at current rates)

Posts

20.48 The resource requirements of $5,637,700, at maintenance level, relate to the posts indicated in table 20.16 above.

Consultants and experts

20.49 The estimated requirements of $293,600, reflecting an increase of $26,400, would cover the cost of (a) consultants fees and travel ($101,400), to provide specialized expertise on issues such as assessment of free zones, technology initiatives in the ESCWA member States and mainstreaming a gender perspective into selected productive and services sectors, as well as in the preparation of a number of publications/studies; and (b) the eight expert group meetings listed above ($192,200). The increase of $26,400 is due to additional requirements for consultants ($12,700) and for expert group meetings ($13,700).

Travel

20.50 The estimated requirements of $73,300, at maintenance level, would provide for travel of staff for consultations with Governments and intergovernmental organizations, collection of data and participation and coordination with other regional commissions, the specialized agencies and United Nations offices and departments.

Subprogramme 5
Development, coordination and harmonization of statistics and information

Table 20.17 **Summary of requirements by object of expenditure**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

(1) *Regular budget*

Object of expenditure	*1996–1997 expenditures*	*1998–1999 appropriations*	*Resource growth*		*Total before recosting*	*Recosting*	*2000–2001 estimates*
			Amount	*Percentage*			
Posts	1 999.4	2 709.3	–	–	2 709.3	121.6	2 830.9
Other staff costs	–	–	28.4	–	28.4	2.9	31.3
Consultants and experts	44.7	190.2	(28.4)	(14.9)	161.8	16.3	178.1
Travel	15.6	24.3	17.0	69.9	41.3	2.0	43.3
Total	**2 059.7**	**2 923.8**	**17.0**	**0.5**	**2 940.8**	**142.8**	**3 083.6**

(2) *Extrabudgetary resources*

1996–1997 expenditures	1998–1999 estimates	Source of funds	2000–2001 estimates
		(a) Services in support of:	
–	–	(i) United Nations organizations	–
–	–	(ii) Extrabudgetary activities	–
–	–	(b) Substantive activities	–
		(c) Operational projects:	
61.1	852.9	UNDP	225.9
9.0	9.6	UNICEF	–
8.8	102.0	ESCWA Trust Fund	–
73.7	19.2	World Bank	–
2.0	–	ILO	–
59.3	123.3	Multilateral sources	–
6.5	10.0	Bilateral sources	–
Total	**220.4**	**1 117.0**	**225.9**
Total (1) and (2)	**2 280.1**	**4 040.8**	**3 309.5**

Table 20.18 **Post requirements**

Subprogramme 5. Development, coordination and harmonization of statistics and information

	Established posts		Temporary posts					
	Regular budget		Regular budget		Extrabudgetary resources		Total	
	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001	1998–1999	2000–2001
Professional category and above								
D-1	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
P-5	2	2	–	–	1	1	3	3
P-4/3	3	3	–	–	–	–	3	3
P-2/1	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
Total	**7**	**7**	**–**	**–**	**1**	**1**	**8**	**8**
Other categories								
Local level	9	9	–	–	2	–	11	9
Total	**9**	**9**	**–**	**–**	**2**	**–**	**11**	**9**
Grand total	**16**	**16**	**–**	**–**	**3**	**1**	**19**	**17**

20.51 This subprogramme is implemented by the Statistics Division. During the biennium 1998–1999, special emphasis was placed on improving the dissemination of regional statistics through the use of advanced information technology. While continuing to provide regional comparable statistics and indicators needed for assessing and monitoring progress achieved in sustainable development in the ESCWA region, during the biennium 2000–2001, the subprogramme will concentrate on upgrading these services to better respond to the renewed and growing interest in statistics and indicators covering a wide range of economic, social and, for the first time, environmental concerns associated with sustainable development.

20.52 Another principal area of work for this subprogramme will be to continue to develop regional statistics and promote international statistical classifications, standards and systems, including gender statistics. By closely working with Governments of the region and in cooperation with regional and international organizations,

the programme of work will strive to improve the national capabilities needed to apply new information technologies and effect the statistical changes or adjustments needed to cope with the requirements emerging from recommendations of United Nations global conferences and to adopt and implement the latest developments in internationally recognized statistical concepts, standards and classifications. The ultimate objective resides in enhancing the collection and dissemination of statistics in the ESCWA region with improved reliability, validity, timeliness and international comparability. As follow-up to the current project on development of national gender statistics programme in the Arab countries, particular attention will be given to the propagation of gender-sensitive statistics.

20.53 Extrabudgetary resources foreseen for this subprogramme will be rallied to support two main mandates within the United Nations system: the provision of gender statistics and the Common Country Assessment/Minimum National Social Data Set (CCA/MNSDS) necessary for following up to the recommendations of global conferences.

Expected accomplishments

20.54 The main expected accomplishments will include: faster and more efficient access to ESCWA statistical information by end-users; concise and harmonized statistical data by restructuring and consolidating ESCWA publications; implementation by ESCWA member States of the 1993 System of National Accounts and the Common Country Assessment/Minimum National Social Data Set (CCA/MNSDS); increased awareness of gender statistics by the countries of the region; and adoption of international statistical classifications and standards in the economic area by the central statistical organizations.

Outputs

20.55 During the biennium 2000–2001, the following activities will be undertaken:

(a) *Servicing of intergovernmental/expert bodies*

(i) Substantive servicing. Six meetings of the Statistical Committee;

(ii) Parliamentary documentation. Report to the Commission on the fourth session of the Statistical Committee;

(iii) Six ad hoc expert group meetings on: foreign trade statistics in the ESCWA region; social indicators; economically active population: employment, unemployment and under employment; links between the balance of payments and the 1993 System of National Accounts; industrial statistics; and gender statistics.

(b) *Other substantive activities*

(i) Thirteen recurrent publications: *Bulletin on Vital Statistics in ESCWA Member States*, Nos. 3 and 4; *Statistical Abstract of the ESCWA Region*, Nos. 20 and 21; *Bulletin of National Accounts*, Nos. 20 and 21; *External Trade Bulletin of the ESCWA Region*, No. 10; *Compendium of Social Statistics*, No. 4; *Bulletin of Industrial Statistics*, No. 5; and *Statistical Newsletter* (four issues);

(ii) Non-recurrent publications. *Manual on social indicators*;

(iii) Booklets, pamphlets, fact sheets, wall charts, information kits. Wall charts on women and men: the changing role of Arab women; and quality of life: selected social indicators;

(iv) Technical material (databases, software, etc). Development and maintenance of databases on regional social indicators; on energy, water and environment; on national accounts; on labour force statistics; on gender statistics in Arab countries; on prices and financial statistics; on industrial statistics; and on the development of an ESCWA statistics home page and of the ESCWA statistical information system;

(c) *International cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison*

(i) Participation and cooperation in the Statistical Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic countries; Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics; Standing Technical Committee of the League of Arab States and its subsidiary bodies; Statistical Committee of Council of Arab Economic Unity; International Statistical Institute; Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts; United Nations Statistical Commission; ILO, and the annual sessions of the Administrative Committee on Coordination Subcommittee on Statistics;

(ii) Cooperation/coordination with the Statistical Division in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs; the regional commissions, etc.

(d) *Technical cooperation (RB/XB)*

(i) Advisory services. Backstopping of regional advisory services on national accounts and economic statistics, electronic data-processing and household surveys;

(ii) Training workshop on social indicators;

(iii) Two projects on: poverty information and monitoring system: Republic of Yemen; and development of a national gender statistics programme in the Arab countries;

Resource requirements (at current rates)

Posts

20.56 The resource requirements of $2,709,300, at maintenance level, relate to the posts indicated in table 20.18 above.

Other staff costs

20.57 An estimated new provision of $28,400 would be required for general temporary assistance in order to update data entry and strengthen the operation of ESCWA's statistical information system.

Consultants and experts

20.58 An estimated provision of $161,800, reflecting a decrease of $28,400, would be required for consultants ($26,600) to provide specialized expertise needed to prepare case studies on issues such as employment, unemployment and underemployment; social indicators; gender statistics; links between the balance of payments and the 1993 System of National Accounts, etc; and the six expert groups meeting ($135,200) mentioned above. The decrease of $28,400 includes decreases of $2,800 for consultants and $25,600 under expert group meetings.

Travel

20.59 The estimated requirements of $41,300, including a resource growth of $17,000, would provide for consultations with government officials, collection of data and coordination and participation in meetings with organizations active in the field of statistical activities within or outside the United Nations system.

D. Programme support

Table 20.19 **Summary of requirements by object of expenditure**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

(1) *Regular budget*

Object of expenditure	*1996-1997 expenditures*	*1998-1999 appropriations*	*Resource growth*		*Total before recosting*	*Recosting*	*2000-2001 estimates*
			Amount	*Percentage*			
Posts	12 041.2	16 739.9	1 478.1	8.8	18 218.0	1 323.6	19 541.6
Other staff costs	174.0	410.0	453.9	110.7	863.9	86.7	950.6
Consultants and experts	27.3	34.2	29.8	87.1	64.0	6.5	70.5
Travel	61.9	69.8	20.0	28.6	89.8	4.4	94.2
Contractual services	293.8	440.8	459.1	104.1	899.9	90.3	990.2
General operating expenses	1 968.1	4 301.4	(728.1)	(16.9)	3 573.3	358.6	3 931.9
Hospitality	0.6	18.0	–	–	18.0	1.8	19.8
Supplies and materials	604.4	681.8	82.0	12.0	763.8	76.7	840.5
Furniture and equipment	896.6	983.6	(218.6)	(22.2)	765.0	76.8	841.8
Total	**16 067.9**	**23 679.5**	**1 576.2**	**6.6**	**25 255.7**	**2 025.4**	**27 281.1**

(2) *Extrabudgetary resources*

1996-1997 expenditures	*1998-1999 estimates*	*Source of funds*	*2000-2001 estimates*
		(a) Services in support of:	
–	–	(i) United Nations organizations	–
–	–	(ii) Extrabudgetary activities	–
–	–	(b) Substantive activities	–
		(c) Operational projects:	
1 168.1	787.3	ESCWA Trust Fund	–
56.7	5.7	Multilateral sources	–
1 224.8	**793.0**	**Total**	**–**
17 292.7	**24 472.5**	**Total (1) and (2)**	**27 281.1**

Table 20.20 **Post requirements**

Programme support

	Established posts		*Temporary posts*					
	Regular budget		*Regular budget*		*Extrabudgetary resources*		*Total*	
	1998-1999	*2000-2001*	*1998-1999*	*2000-2001*	*1998-1999*	*2000-2001*	*1998-1999*	*2000-2001*
Professional category and above								
D-1	2	2	–	–	–	–	2	2
P-5	4	5	–	–	–	–	4	5
P-4/3	19	21	–	–	–	–	19	21
P-2/1	6	7	–	–	–	–	6	7
Total	**31**	**35**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**31**	**35**
Other categories								
Local level	107	112	–	–	–	–	107	112
Field Service	3	3	–	–	–	–	3	3
Total	**110**	**115**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**110**	**115**
Grand total	**141**	**150**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**141**	**150**

20.60 Programme support comprises the Administrative Services Division, including conference and library services and the Programme Planning and Technical Cooperation Division. The latter Division will be carrying out the functions of the former Programme Planning and Coordination Unit and the Technical Cooperation Division.

Outputs

20.61 The outputs of the Administrative Services Division include the following:

(a) Providing administrative direction and all appropriate support services (including human resources management, financial, general services, conference, electronic data-processing and library services) to the secretariat of ESCWA;

(b) Advising the Executive Secretary on all administrative, management, security and organizational matters;

(c) Conducting staff/management relations;

(d) Providing Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) coordination;

(e) Administering the implementation of the headquarters agreement signed between the United Nations and the host Government;

(f) Providing common service arrangements for ESCWA and other United Nations offices and agencies occupying the ESCWA headquarters building (United Nations House).

20.62 The outputs of the new Programme Planning and Technical Cooperation Division include the following:

(a) Planning, monitoring and evaluating ESCWA regular budget and extrabudgetary activities and technical cooperation programmes;

(b) Promoting development assistance activities and projects commensurate with the needs of the region;

(c) Providing, through a pool of highly qualified experts, advisory and technical cooperation services to member States and technical support to the substantive divisions of the Commission.

Resource requirements (at current rates)

Posts

20.63 The resource requirements of $18,218,000, reflecting an increase of $1,478,100, relate to 35 posts in the Professional category, 112 Local level posts and three Field Service posts, as shown in table 20.20 above. The increase is the result of the proposed upgrading of one P-3 post to the P-4 level in order to reflect the higher responsibility of the P-3 post as a result of the rising need for automation, electronic data-processing and communications and the increasing complexity of the work in this area, and the inward redeployment from executive direction and management of one P-5, one P-4, one P-3, one P-2 and five Local level posts attached to the Programme Planning and Coordination Unit which, it is proposed, should be merged with the Technical Cooperation Division to form the Programme Planning and Technical Cooperation Division, pursuant to a recommendation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

Other staff costs

20.64 An estimated provision of $863,900, reflecting an increase of $453,900, would be required as follows: (a) $293,000 for general temporary assistance to cover the replacement of staff on extended sick and maternity leave, as well as additional assistance during peak workload periods ($72,000) and to provide continuing support for IMIS operations subsequent to the completion of installation ($221,000); (b) $125,300 for overtime during peak periods of work; and (c) $445,600, to provide full round-the-clock contractual security coverage for the new building and parking areas in Beirut. The increase of $453,900 includes $221,000 for IMIS support and maintenance and $232,900 for additional requirements for security services.

Consultants and experts

20.65 The estimated requirements of $64,000, reflecting an increase of $29,800, would cover the cost of specialized expertise in such fields as medical expertise, legal services on a retainer basis and consultancies for videoconferencing and integration into the satellite communications system. The increase is due to additional requirements for videoconferencing.

Travel

20.66 The estimated requirements of $89,800, including an increase of $20,000, would provide for travel of staff for consultations on administrative, personnel, budget and finance, procurement, security matters and technical cooperation management. The increase of $20,000 would be redeployed from executive direction and management, where it was previously approved for the Programme Planning and Coordination Unit.

Contractual services

20.67 An estimated provision of $899,900, reflecting an increase of $459,100, would be required as follows: (a) $115,800 for part-time language teachers; (b) $126,300 for external editing, printing, translation and binding of a number of publications; (c) $287,600 for electronic data-processing services; and (d) $370,200 for outsourcing the services of telephone operators, messengers and related support functions. The increase of $459,100 results from the requirements for outsourcing the services ($370,200) and additional requirements ($88,900) for special software services, such as GIS, Statistical analyses, leased Internet subscription lines, Web Mirror.

General operating expenses

20.68 An estimated provision of $3,573,300, reflecting a decrease of $728,100, would be required as follows: (a) $1,141,600, reflecting a decrease of $869,600, for maintenance of premises, including maintenance supplies; (b) $996,200, reflecting a decrease of $54,900, for utilities (electricity, water, fuel, oil for boiler and standby generators); (c) $217,900, including a resource growth of $25,900, for rental and maintenance of furniture, office and electronic data-processing equipment; (d) $873,300, including a resource growth of $40,500, for communications including telephone, fax, postage and pouches; (e) $186,800, including a resource growth of $130,000, for maintenance of office automation equipment, photocopiers, reproduction

and other equipment; and (f) $157,500, at maintenance level, for miscellaneous services to cover freight and related costs (clearance) and general insurance.

Hospitality

20.69 An estimated provision of $18,000, at maintenance level, would be required for official functions and hospitality held in connection with the ESCWA ministerial session, meetings of intergovernmental bodies, the visits of high-level government officials and other special events.

Supplies and materials

20.70 An estimated provision of $763,800, including a resource growth of $82,000, would be required for office supplies, photocopy paper, materials for electronic data-processing and internal printing, library books, subscriptions and supplies.

Furniture and equipment

20.71 An estimated provision of $765,000, reflecting a decrease $218,600, would be required for acquisition and replacement of electronic data-processing, reproduction, transportation and communications equipment.

Table 20.21 **Summary of follow-up action taken to implement relevant recommendations of the internal and external oversight bodies and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions**

Brief description of the recommendation	*Action taken to implement the recommendation*
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/52/7, Chap. II, Part V)	
The Committee recommends that the format of presentation of programmes of activities of the regional commissions should be reviewed with a view to delineating more clearly substantive activities vis-à-vis programme support and harmonizing the budget presentation (paras. V.4 and V.80).	An effort has been made in this proposed programme budget to harmonize the format of presentation of the programme of activities of the regional commissions. The new presentation concerns a standardized presentation of the parts on executive direction and management and programme support. In each section of the regional commissions, the part on executive direction and management now includes the activities and resources related to the Office of the Executive Secretary, the Secretary of the Commission and the unit/structure dealing with information services. Similarly the part on programme support includes the activities and resources related to (a) administrative and common services (including programme planning, budget and finance; human resources management; general services); (b) conference and library services; and (c) management of technical cooperation. The format of presentation of the parts on policy-making organs and programme of work has been always harmonized and heretofore has not been modified.

Brief description of the recommendation	*Action taken to implement the recommendation*
The Committee notes that the level of resources proposed for programme support in some regional commissions continues to be high in relation to resources requested for the programme of work. The Committee also reiterates its view that the requirements for programme support should have been considerably lower and that the resources thus released could have been diverted to substantive activities (para. V.5).	In an effort to achieve more equilibrium between resources released for substantive activities and those allocated for programme support, ESCWA abolished 15 Local level posts in programme support during the biennium 1998–1999, or around 8 per cent of total Local level posts. However, the smaller the organization, the higher the overhead cost in terms of administrative services. ESCWA is the smallest of the five regional commissions.
Budget submissions should indicate the extent of review by intergovernmental organs of the programmes of work of the commissions and their various organizational and institutional issues, including intergovernmental structures. The budget submissions should identify the financial implications resulting from intergovernmental reviews, as well as proposed reallocation within the same budget section of released resources to other priority issues. All increases in requirements resulting from intergovernmental reviews should also be indicated in the budget submissions (para. V.6).	ESCWA's ministerial session, its principal intergovernmental organ, and the session of its Technical Committee are convened biennially in odd years, while budget preparations take place in even years. Likewise, the sessions of the majority of intergovernmental specialized subsidiary bodies of ESCWA take place after the preparation of the budget proposal. To circumvent this problem, during budget preparations for the biennium 2000–2001, ESCWA solicited the assistance of UNDP offices in ESCWA member States in conveying to governmental focal points, in both the economic and social fields, a list of priority areas by thematic subprogramme identified by ESCWA as core priorities around which outputs and activities would be formulated. ESCWA also convened a special meeting of the Advisory Committee of Ambassadors, which consists of heads of diplomatic missions in the host country of the Commission, or their representatives, as well as a high-level representative of the host country, to solicit its views on the priority areas identified for the budget. The Advisory Committee endorsed the proposed budget. The Committee on Water Resources, during its second session in December 1998, reviewed the programme of work in the area of water resources. The programme of work proposed for the biennium 2000–2001 will be submitted to the Technical Committee of the Commission in May 1999.

Brief description of the recommendation	*Action taken to implement the recommendation*
The Committee recommends that future budget submissions identify publications indicated by the secretariats, including studies to be undertaken by consultants, and indicate more clearly intended users of United Nations publications, both recurrent and non-recurrent. The Committee also reiterates its view, reflected in paragraph 76 of its first report on the proposed budget for the biennium 1996–1997 (A/50/7), that the secretariat should indicate to the relevant intergovernmental bodies the number, type, cost and audience of each publication, the date intended for publication, the date when each publication was first requested, who requested such publications, when it was last reviewed and by whom (para. V.7).	The majority of ESCWA publications for the biennium 2000–2001 are mandated by or derived from resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council or by the Commission itself. As indicated above, the ESCWA member States endorsed the priorities identified by ESCWA for the biennium 2000–2001, which form the umbrella for outputs/activities selected for the biennium 2000–2001.
The Committee draws the attention to its comments and observations in paragraph 83 of chapter I and points out also that requirements for consultants in future budget submissions should be prepared in accordance with such guidelines which the General Assembly may wish to establish as a result of its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the comprehensive policy guidelines on consultants to be submitted in accordance with section VI, paragraph 4, of Assembly resolution 51/226 of 3 April 1997 (para. V.8).	The use of consultants funds at ESCWA has allowed ESCWA to perform with greater flexibility while complying with member States mandates. Use of consultants in ESCWA is carried out in compliance with United Nations rules, regulations and procedures.
The Advisory Committee recommends that the description of international cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison be significantly improved so that member States are provided with a clear picture of how these activities relate and contribute to other quantifiable and/or identifiable mandated activities (para. V.10).	ESCWA has attempted to relate activities under the category "international cooperation and inter-agency coordination" to its programmed activities. In describing action taken under this heading during the course of a biennium, ESCWA depicts, in detail, in its monitoring report to the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the nature of activities described and their relevance to the programme of work.

Brief description of the recommendation	*Action taken to implement the recommendation*
Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/52/426)	
ESCWA management has already taken action to decrease the use of consultants and intends to continue to do so. A broadly defined structure would provide more flexibility in addressing multidisciplinary activities and in meeting emerging needs. In that regard, ESCWA is invited to look into the cost-effectiveness of the Technical Cooperation Division, since the current volume of annual expenditures on operational projects does not appear to justify the existence of a separate division. It is also essential to clearly articulate the strategy for technical cooperation in order to provide a framework within which operational activities are conducted (para. 155).	In response to the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services concerning the cost-effectiveness of the Technical Cooperation Division, ESCWA has merged the Technical Cooperation Division with the Programme Planning and Cooperation Unit so that the two form one division, entitled Programme Planning and Technical Cooperation Division. This will also serve to enhance mutual support between normative and operational activities. The strategy for ESCWA operational activities is that they should be the operational arms of its normative activities.
As for the overall managerial and administrative issues, improvements are demonstrable in many respects; there remain, however, a number of weaknesses that need to be addressed. First and foremost, the decision-making process needs to be more transparent and rational through an effective institutional mechanism for internal consultation. The effectiveness of such a mechanism requires that the terms of reference, as well as the policies and procedures that govern the issues on which the committees and panels are expected to provide guidance to management, be well articulated, and that the members of those committees and panels are well aware of the procedures. It also requires that the composition of such committees is the result of well-defined and agreed-upon criteria on the basis of which the members are selected. In that regard, ESCWA should consider extending the consultative mechanism to include project appraisal review and publications review. Guidance to management in those two areas could be particularly effective (para. 156).	Terms of reference of internal consultative bodies in various instances are given in administrative instructions or guidelines determined by Headquarters. Steps are being taken to establish consultative mechanisms in the areas of project appraisal and publications reviews.

Brief description of the recommendation	*Action taken to implement the recommendation*
In an apparent effort to address the issue of transparency, management has recently taken important steps to enlarge the consultative process. Those efforts must be enhanced and move towards addressing the apparently highly centralized decision-making process, in which authority tends to be delegated upward rather than downward. An essential step in addressing the issue would be to articulate clearly in a document the authority, responsibility and accountability of programme managers at various levels. The empowerment of middle management should be reinforced by clearly written policies procedures (para. 157).	Authority, responsibility and accountability are specified in the job description and performance appraisal system (PAS) planning form of each staff member.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
Proposed organizational structure and post distribution for the biennium 2000-2001